The Herald and News

UNCLE WASH'S

ARRAIGNMENT

THE OLD TIME DARKEY ARRESTED FOR SELLING WHISKEY,

He Pleads His Own Case, Convinces the Jury and Captivates the Judge.

"I ain't nuvver tole you 'bout de time dey had me up befo' de judge at Atlantur fur makin' wide ut license er little uv dat licker dat makes kings uv us all?" asked Uncle Wash the other day. "I don't know how in de worl' dey cotch me," continued the old darkey, "fur I'd bin makin" it ever since de war up in de holler at de Indian Camp Springs whar de Indian made it long ago befo' enny of us wuz born-jes' fo' or five gallons ter keep de ole man's cow catcher gwine," he continued, "an' I don't see how in de wurl dese heah river new officers foun' it out. But dey did an' fur one time de ole man was me. sho' in a tight place.

"You see," he continued, "it ain't you suh? everybody who kno's how to make good whiskey. I don't mean dis a high roller an' dat decatur wus hear stuff what de po' white trash er picture in er looking glass. It wus makes up in de mountaings so strong and vile, dat when you oncork a bottle of it on dis yearth it make de debbil sneeze in de reguns below. But I'm talkin' about sho' 'nuff whiskey-whiskey dat sho' 'nuff white folks drink-so puore and ripe dat all you haf er do is oncork de stopper on dis yearth and watch de roses bloom in paradise.

"You must make it in October," he said, knowingly, "erbout de time de fall poet begins to write his poem on de golden rod, when de leabs begins to turn purple an' golden an' de air am crisp an' sparkling, an' de spring water am full ob falling nuts an' de 'romer ob de sweet dews. You mus' kotch yore water frum outen a col spring dat flows frum under some sweet paw paw tree runnin' ober a bed rock ob blue limestone in which a few acuns done drapt to give it de streuf ob de oak tree. Den sum night when de moon am full and de sent ob de wild haws fill all de air, jes go out-but dar now," he said laughingly, "whut's all dat gotter do wid dis story. Neber min,' jes you come roun' to my cabin sum day chile an lemme let you taste it onct. It's den you'll see the gates ob glory open fur a minute or two, and de lad der of konsolashum run up and down twixt de heaben and de yearth. O, its den you'll wish yore neck wus er spiral pipe runnin' roun' and roun' so dat one drink would hafter go fifty miles befo' it got outer sight," and the old man laughed heartily.

"But dey kotch me," he continued, "and dey tuck me to Atlantur and when dey put me in de prison folks all got 'roun' me an' cried an' tole me good bye an' my wife she took it pow'ful hard an' she wanted to go an' git de preacher to come and pray fur me. Dats the way wid sum kristuns," said the old man with a tinge of sarcasm in his voice, "dey willin" ernuff to play hide an' seek wid de debbil long as dey think dem am safe but jes as soon es dey gits kotched up wid den dey wanter go in pardnership wid de Lord. Huh! dey didn't sker me 'tall an' jes say to shuns I wants-dat wus my privulme wife 'look heah Dinah you jes stop your wailin' an' bellowin' an' go | 'm er low bow wid my hat under my on home an' ef I aint dar by cane grinding time you jes go on an' marry Brer Peter Dawson, de preacher, jedge lak de jedges ob de Bible.' An' an' on de night ob yore weddin' supper you jes go down to de medder spring dig fo' foot under it and fetch out dat blue demmejohn ob bred-inthe purple licker I berried dar fo'teen years ergo, an' you an' Brer Pe-

ter jes drink it to my health fur ef de jury yo sees befo' you heah a pore you don't its so good an' puore an' ripe it will rise itself sum day.'

wife's secun' husban' to drink. Huh! jail 'til cane-grindin' time. Not fur thing, an' I'd bin willin' to plead guilty and say farewell," he added.

"Den dey saunt er lettle lawyer to me an' he say he gwi' prove I was er yallerby-don't your see yo'self I'm as black es er cro'-an' he say he gwi' git out er writ of circum cum fetchum an' ignis fat you-us an' abeet-de corpus dat jedge myself and I wus gwi' file er cross-cut saw bill into dat cote sho.'

"Jes 'fo' de trial cum off I saunt down to my wife an' tole her to dig up dat gallun I dun berrid down dar in de medder fo'teen years befo' an' to fill up dat decatur my ole marster gib we befo' he die an' to fotch it to

"Oh! I tell you my ole master wus as thick es de roun' pastern ob er rase hoss, and made ob one solid piece ob cut glass, carved in cameos an' Greek goddermites an' de stop per itself wus de haid ob de Venus herself, on er bust-leastwise dat what ole master sed-an' he lowed she was sho' in de proper place to be on a bust. I tell you suh when dat whiskey got in dat decatur it look lak de grape juice ob heaben kotch in er dimon urn an, framed in de classic glory ob de anshunt Greeks. When de sunlight all on it, it look lak er big blazin' ruby sot in de crown ob er cherubin.

"I slip it under my coate an' went into de cote room. Au' dar dey played er mean trick on me fur dey sot me down in de same pen wid er lot ob po' white trash frum de mountings dat had been kotch in de mean act ob makin' wild cat whiskey. Gord suh it made me mad fur I wan't used to 'soshatin' wid dat kind of white folks.

"Torreckly de jedge an' de jury cum in an' de lawyer took me off an' say he bin 'ployed to offen' me. De jedge sot down an' red out 'Newnighted State ergin Washington Grundy.'

"'Heah marster,' sez I, and Gord bless yore soul honey I pranced up before dat jedge innercent lookin' es de new born colt when he pranced ober de speckled calf layin' in de weeds. Den de jedge look ober his glasses sorter kind lak. He say Gord an' ali dat, I tole him I much erbleeze ter him but I was gwi' go dar an' tell de truf and talk too, an' bless yn honey he knows er gennerman when he sees him an' he red sumpin, ergin me an' den ax me ef I'm guilty or not guilty.

"'Yes, marster,' sez I. 'I'm guilty an' not guilty, too, an' I'd lak ter splain to his honorable cote how it

"De jedge he smile an' de jury lat -Gord bluss you honey dey knows er gennerman when dey meet him in de rode, too, an' de jedge he tells me I has de right to make any explunatage an' when he said dat I jes made arm and sez I, 'Thank you marster, you am er gennerman sho,' an' er I laid aside my ole hat, button up tight my ole double brested King Elfrud cote dat ole marster gin me whut he uster wear when he made big speeches an' I sez:

"'Marse jedge an' gennerman ob

ole nigger kotch in the act uf manufactorin' fur his stommick's sake a "She kno' dat I wus gwine to stay | leetle ob dat divine stuff dat makes | in dis jail," chucked the old man, 'I kings ob us all an' fur dat reezin ole King Alfred cote anuder link an' didn't make dat whiskey fur my fotch up in his ole aige befo' his honorbul cote fur transgreshuns ob de I had no notion ob stayin' heah in dis law. You ax me ef I'm gilty ob makin' whiskey -dst wild cat stuff makin' good whiskey-now ef I made dat makes de rag weeds bloom in mean whiskey dat ud been ernudder paradise and turn de roses ob hope befo' your honor, I've bin head to into de dog fennel ob despair an' I tells you no. But ef you ax me ef I'm guilty ob makin' a leetle ot dat

hart ob be mos' wretched and misera-

a he in my life 'I mus' tell you yes.' "'Not dat vile stuff dat kills our moral swashun an' lays us in de gutter wid de dorgs but dat blessed angul ile which taken in moderashun as er gennerman should, clothes de beggar in silk, makes friends fur de friendless and coins gold fur de goldless. Dis am de licker dat turns rags into roses, ole maids inter bloomsung to; dat Washington praised and gennerman ob de jary,' and I pulled out dat decatur an' hole it befo' dey nerman ob de jury,' I sed wid truf in its eye an' lub in its hart, de embodiment of de yunerverse. Taste it an' ef it am whiskey-dat stuff wid wild cats claws and debbils breath den send me up 'long wid po' white trash fur makin' wild cat whiskey es er groveller wid swine an' er eater ob husks. But ef it smells lak de bref of infant angels, looks into and tastes like de resurrected dream

ole man free. Wid dat I oncorks de

bottle and lo! dat dingy ole cote

room changed in er minit. Stid ob

de smell of books an' sweatin' law-

vers an' ambeer an' dusty floors,

hed cum dar to bathe perfumed wid

ha'r dat fell ober dey allerbaster

shoulders nointed wid de oil Ep-

into rale flowers, de dingy ole winmohning when de day king rise, de temptation to lib lak a gentlemun carpet ob blue gras down in de med- gentlemun will you send de ole man der wid de daisies an' daffodils all up?" ober it an' eben de spider webs on de ceilin' wus changed into a tapestry of silver, whilst de freskoes hung in filigree works ob gold. I looked at de jedge an' de jury an' dar dey sot in stuperment an' 'stonishment wid acquital writ in de tender depths ob dey meltin' eyes. I handed dat have found you not guilty. Heah decatur to de fuss jury—he jes smelt am fifty dollars to pay the rivernew it an' fell ober in er dead faint call- on de naixt run you make at de Inin' out sorter dream lak 'Not guilty, dain Camp Spring an' ef it happen Not guilty!' De naixt one taste it to be a leetle too much to pay de an' I sed de light of genersis break | rivernew why you jest send the bal in on him. De third one tuck er big ance in dat licker dat makes kings swallow an' dey had to hold 'im to ob us all too youre friend, the jedge de yearth to keep him frum vapor- of the Southern District of de New atin' lak Exerdue to heaben. An' all de yudders es fast as dey taste it wus added to de numbers ob dem dat wus fu, me. But when it got to de jedge, sub, he took er grate big swaller to see ef I wus lyin' or not, an' Gord bless youre soul honey be hadn't mor'n tate it befo' he ris frum dat beach shouted 'Glory Hallylujah' an' fe!l on my neck an' wept. looked roun at de lawyers what adn't tasted it, suh, au' dar dey sot ning outen de corners ob dey mouths lak po' hounds 'round er sawsage mill, an' befo' I knowed what it all ment dey all broke out mouths lak po' hounds 'round singin' dat good ole him: "Dis am de stuff we long had saut

An' morned bekas we found it not.'

"When I seed I had 'em on de morner's bench, suh, den it wus my time. I drawed myself up two or three foot higher, buttoned up my

"'An' now gemmen ob de jury sence dis Newnighted States govument dun seen fit to 'raign me I wanter 'raign hit. I've been heah listen to de greates lawyer de State ob Georgy ever raised, my ole marster de 'Onebul Felix Grundy, an' time an' ergin Ive seed 'im stand ra' divine licker which turns de tuneless heah in dis very cote dat I've got on but ob mankind into a hall wid harps an' dis very room an' spake de roof wid de thunder ob his larnin' an' de of a thousan' strings es I neber tole lightnin' ob his wit. Allers on de side ob de po', allers on de side ob jestus. An' ef he was erlive today he'd git up heah an' say to you all let dis ole nigger go an' you kno' you'd do it.

"'In de good ole days gemmen he tort me meny things. He tort me to be true, to tell de truf an' to raise horses. Men lak him an' youre fathin' gals an' er grabe yard funiral ers gemmen tuck my ancesturs out "You nurver seed dat decatur is discourse into er poem on paradise. ob de jungles at barbarity an' led us Dat puts cheerity into our hearts, into de blessed temple ob religion youth into our veins and spreads de an' light. Dey made slaves ob us to warm comfort ob lub oder de feather do it gemmen, but I thang Gord I bed ob de yunerverse. Dis am de | wus erlowed to be a slave in dis licker dat unlocks de doors ob de world fur de sake ob bein' eturnally magernashun an' leeds de poets free in the naixt. Meny and meny mind through de streets of gold wid | er time gemmen I've driv my ole crystal pillars up to de wall ob amer- marster in his cheariut an' fo' an' thest, up to de battlements of light he'd tell you hissef, suh, ef he wus whar he sees de stars ob beauterful heah today I'm de onliest nigger in thoughts a millun miles befo' dey de whole State ob Georgy dat can git to him commin' on angel wings drive a thurrer bred fo' 'im-hau' in beams ob sunlight. Dis am de holdin' de ribbons wid de fo' fingers licker dat falls lak a sphinter ob star ob de lef han' an' playin' on the tenlight to string de dewdraps ob de der moufs es gently es er lady touches har' dat Sollerman drunk an' David de strings ob de light gittar. He made er kristun an' er gentlemun, Ole Hickery swore by. Head it am aigucated my po' cannibal pallit to de glory ob Georgy mutton au' de sweetness ob Georgy beef. An' eyes an' it blin' em lak de sunshine | it wus frum his side boad I fuss got risin' in de valley, 'Heah it am gen. de taste ob dat licker you jest tasted-dat licker dat makes kings ob us all—an' all I wanted in dis wurl wus ter stay wid him twell I die. But in my ole aige heah come dis Newnighted States govumen' an' sot me free -an' O! marsters dey sot me free indeed-free frum de freinds I lubbed, free frum de cumperny ob gennermen, free frum de good things ob dis wurl, an' wus ob your eyes lak de lakes ob lub, in de all frum de sight but not de apperdepths ob de blue eyed cherubins tite ob dat licker dat makes kings ob us all. 'Stid ob drivin' a cheariut ob de fuss kiss yore sweetheart gib down de pike of de valley ob plenty, you in de days ob long ergoden sot de I mus' plow a leetle tow haided mule on de flinty hill sides ob poverty. 'Stid ob 'soshatin' wid larned men who sot in de grate cotes ob dis country an' de cotes ob de king I mus' be cussed an' mocked by de you'd er thought all de school gals hill billy an' de po' white trash an' forced to 'soshate wid lowlived an' de otter ob de roses ob Eden on dey | no mannered niggers an' field hans'. An' stid ob drinking de licker ob life frum de decatur on de sideboard in pollo made. You'd er thought de my ole aige I'm forced to drink de jaintor ob heaben had turned de branch of poverty frum de goured sprinkliu' pot of glory on de yearth dat grows in de gardin. Raised on filled wid de water ob peppermint roast beef but now I hafter hustle to an' cam'fire, perfumed wid vilets and | git bacon; raised on de lick ob civtinctured wid angul tears. De ole erlizashun but now I has ter figured paper on de walls blossumed drink de branch water ob barbarity. When I remember de things I ders blazed lak de winders en de uster in my youth sumtimes now de ole dusty mattin' on de flo' wus er nearly overcomes me. After all dis

""No by de eternal we will

"An' dey all crowd 'roun' me soon es dey journ cote dey shook my han' an' de jedge tech me on de arman'

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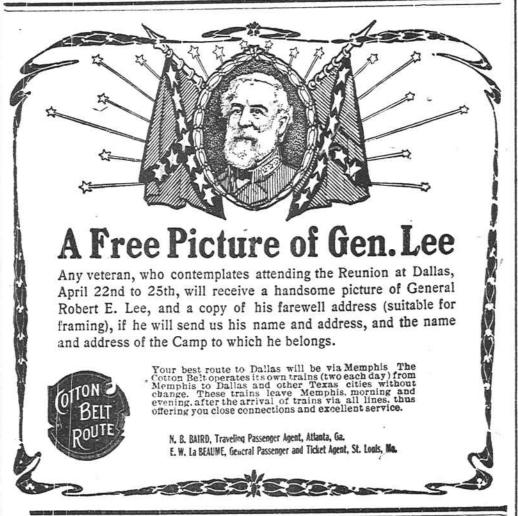
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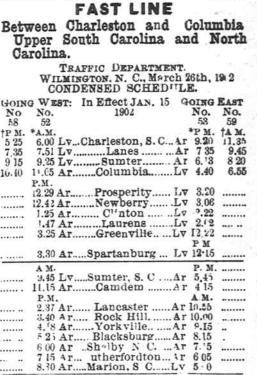
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